

## **PRESS RELEASE**

**For immediate release**

### **Title: Telephone befriending: a valuable service during lockdown**

Healthwatch Enfield staff and volunteers were pleased to be able to support the London Borough of Enfield telephone befriending scheme during the Coronavirus outbreak, which formed part of the activities of the Community Resilience Board and the 'Enfield Stands Together' partnership. There were many other organisations and individuals supporting this activity, including London Borough of Enfield staff, councillors, other volunteers and volunteering organisations.

This report gives a snapshot of issues raised by residents identified as being vulnerable or at risk within the London Borough of Enfield during the Coronavirus pandemic.

Overall, Healthwatch Enfield volunteers made 413 telephone befriending calls during this period.

Without doubt, the main issue was the impact of social isolation on health and well-being including mental health issues, with those residents with ongoing health needs being particularly concerned. Food parcels and medicines delivery were really appreciated. The support of family and neighbours was also valued by individuals.

Most of the recipients were pleased to receive the calls and a core continued to receive these throughout the period, not missing a call.

The befriending service was valued and should be continued if people request it, with established organisations being asked to support the calls. If or when a second wave arises, or Enfield goes into lockdown again, the London Borough of Enfield should make arrangements to re-establish this valuable service.

We are very grateful to Healthwatch Enfield volunteers and staff who undertook this work at short notice and kept a record of their work as part of the scheme. The rich data collected offers a deeper insight to the wide range of issues and challenges facing vulnerable and at-risk residents.

You can download the report from our [website](#).

**END**

### **NOTES TO EDITORS:**

#### **About Healthwatch Enfield**

Healthwatch Enfield is an independent organisation set-up to ensure that local people have a real say in the way that health and social care services are provided in the borough. It is independent, but part of a national network of Healthwatch organisations set up by Parliament with real powers for change.

We work by: providing information and signposting to help people connect with the most useful services and support available to them; by referring complaints and putting people in touch with the appropriate complaints' process and/or referring them to someone who can support them in making a complaint; and by influencing decision - listening to what people say and feeding back to those who plan, commission and deliver services. This

includes representation on the Health and Wellbeing Board and the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) in Enfield. To find out more please go to [www.healthwatchenfield.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchenfield.co.uk)

### **Contact Information**

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